SIBALLA, THE SORCBRESS

- RIBALIA, THE SORCERESS.

 ARLY LOVE.
 BY J. WILLIAM VAN NAMER.
 When years have rolled their lengths along With mingred Joy and pain.
 And sa is the gent e rain,
 Where clouds obscure our skies coop blue,
 And care an isorrow bend.
 And care an isorrow bend.
 And care an isorrow bend.
 And take has proved to us so take,
 So changeabe a freed.
 We love to wander back in life
 O'er memory's sunny platta
 And tive our happy can dhood o'er,
 our early loves again.

And from communion sweet we find New strength to grapple with The creases and the burdens which our daily lines must give. And Hope points us to look above This world of care and strife. To that clest home in heaven above, Where there's manorial file—Where disappointment cannot come, Nor care, for gred nor pain, Where we will need in endless bliss our early loves again.

SIBALLA, THE SORCERESS;

THE FLOWER GIRL OF LONDON. A TALE OF THE DAYS OF RICHARD CROOKBACE. BY PROF. WILLIAM HENRY PECK. AUTHOR OF "WILD REDUCKN," "THE BEAUTY OF PARIS," "COPPER AND GOLD," "THE EXECU-TIONER OF VENICE." "THE ATTOR

MEY'S PLOT," ETC., ETC. CHAPTER I. THE FLOWER GIRL

Our story opens in the month of May, 1405, the second and last year of the brief and bloody reign of the last of the royal Plan a conet line Richard the Third of England.

As it was the first day of the flowery month the

great mass of the citizens of London were abroad in their holiday attire, and an the market places were thronged with crowds intent upon gayety and pleasure. It was within an hour of the setting of the sun when a young man, accompanied by a little girl of rare beauty of face and form, left the street and entered an enclosed square, in whose centre towered a lofty Maynole decked and crowned with garlands, and around which danced a ring of laughing youth of both sexes. The app a ance of the young man whom we have just mentioned was remarkable even smid that animated scene. The plume in his cap, the costly black velvet garments in which he was attired, and the dark sheathed sword at his thigh betokened that their wearer claimed to be of the

The little girl, whose white and tiny hand chang to his, was also clad in garments of the same hue as those of her companion, and she appeared to be some

was no relationship, beyond that of a protector and protected, though they addressed each other as brother and sister.

"Ah, Flaydilla," said the young gentleman, after advancing several paces into the green, "I must not forget to buy a garland for mother, and yonder is a

"And here is one, b.other Mortimer, not so far," replied the little girl, holding back and pointing to another booth. "Beside that one has an ugly old man in it, while this one is tended by a handsome young

'The flowers will not be less sweet and benutiful, Flaydilla, if sold by the ugry old man," said Mortimer, with a grave smile, but halting and turning towards the flower booth spoken of by Flaydilla.

of the booth he grasped the little hand he held so tightly that Flaydilla looked up in surprise.

"What is the matter, brother Mortimer?" she asked, as she saw his features suffused with a burning blush, and then grow suddenly pale, while his hand trembled violently. "Are you ill ?"

He did not immediately reply, but kept his eyes upon the maiden in the flower booth, who, on perceiving him, had instantly 'urned her back toward

"Can it be Lauretta?" muttered Mortimer, half features. "Lauretta, exposing her beauty to the rude and licentious stare of a market place ! No, it

He advanced toward the booth, with his eyes fixed upon its occupant, who seemed determined that he she turned and faced him suddenly.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "Lauretta here!" Then, seeing that the maiden seemed ready to sink with shame, while tears stole from her beautiful eyes, he added, in a gentler tone, "At least I know that you are not here of your own free will."

"Oh, I would rather be in my grave than in this public place, Mortimer," replied the flower-girl, in a trembling voice, whose agitation could not conceal its melody. "You do not know how I have been threatened, nor with what. Oh, it is dreadful?" she added, as she covered her lovely face with her beantiful hands and stifled her sebs.

"Dear Lauretta," said Mortimer, gently, there is some mystery here which I do not understand. Can I not aid you in any way? Why are you in London? Why in this public place? It is more than a year since I saw you. Your friends in the country-"

"Friends! They were my enemies" exclaimed the girl with great bitterness, and dropping her hands. Why am I in London ! Because-because-alas! how can a modest maiden tell a young gentleman of the wicked proposals of those whom she thought her friends? But, haston away: for yonder comes the one in whose power I am. Do not let her see you, for she will detect that you are a friend and guard against our meeting again. Away! move away

quickly-there, hasten; get behind that tree." induitely surprised by her mahner, Mortimer SIRALLA, THE SORCERESS.

obeyed quickly and was instantly behind the great oak which towered above the little booth, and which effectually hid him and his companion from any one

It seemed very undignine to one so proud as Mortimer Clair to retreat so precipitately, and his check burned as he did so; yet the extreme agitation, and even terror, with which Lagretta had appealed to him, and his amazement at all that he had heard

He whispered to Flaydia to remain silent and bent his ear to learn more of the mystery which had filled his bosom with mingled emotions of doubt,

Little more than two years had passed since he first saw Lauretta, and sie was then a village maiden living with one who claimed to be her sunt. He was then in the country seeking to clear up a dark mystery which had saddened the life of his mother since his birth, a mystery yet unsolved, and which had imparted that grave and thoughtful expression to his handsome face; for Mortimer Clair could not say and prove that his father had ever been married to his mother, nor that he had ever seen that father, nor that his father lived.

While seeking information secretly in the village in which his mother asserted that she had become the lawful wife of a gentleman who had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared a few months before the birth of Mortimer, he had met and loved Lanretta Mansfeld, who had returned his love and promised to be his wife on the first of the next

The supposed aunt of Lauretta, Dame Martha Mansfield, though not wealthy, had the reputation of never being in want, and owned the little house in which she and Lauretta lived a vety secluded

Yet the villagers wondered why Dame Mansfield lived so much to herself, and was so jealously careful in keeping Lauretta aimost a prisoner. Still, she failed to prevent the a iquaintance and courtship of Mortimer and Lauretta; for, from the very beginning, she never suspected that the maiden, led by the hand of fate, had one day rambled into the meadows, glad to escape even for an hour, from her lonely home, had met a handsome young gentleman had conversed with him, dreamed of him, met him in secret again and so on until one day Mortimer Clair pressed his lips to Lauretta's and said:-

"On the first day of next year I will return to Bayburg and claim your promise to be my wife."

All this was unknown to Dame Mansfield, yet when the first day of the next year arrived Mortimer was

She was not there, nor could the villagers tell him she had arrived in Bayburg ten years before with that maiden, then a child scarcely six years old.

Heartsore and sad, and with this new mystery heavy upon his soul and that other mystery of his father still pressing upon his brain, Mortimer Clair rad returned to London to find in his mother's house an other mystery in the person of little Flaydilla, whom Madame Clair had found lying half frozen and senscless upon her doorsteps one gold and s nowy morning while her son was away.

There was a strange and startling likeness to his lost Lauretta in the features of the little waif, who her name was "Fla," and that she had been wandering about London for many months, no doubt, with an old woman who treated her cruelly-as the many bruises and scars upon her tender body proved-and finally that she had escaped from the old woman and wandered here and there until she sank to sleep exhausted upon the hard stone steps where the gentic-

Her grace and beauty, her helplessness and her remarkable resemplance to Lauretta, drew the noble heart of Mortimer Clair closely to the friendless child, and he named her Flaydilla and called her

it was no wonder, then, that he was amazed upon recognizing Lauretta, whom he had given up as false

He had not been long behind the tree when he heard the accents of a harsh and angry voice speaking to Lauretta-a voice which mingled the deep tones of a man with the sharper tones of a woman,

"How" cried this voice. "Not sold a wreath since I left you! Idle hussy, you shall scream for this to-night if something doesn't happen in the meantime. I thought your beauty, such as it is, would attract purchasers, but you have been here

more than an hour and not sold a flower." "I have heard that voice before and to-day," thought Mortimer. "Heard it bawling loudly in the trembling Lauretta.

The sharp clasp of the little hand which clung to his made him look down at his companion, and he saw that the child was trembling violently and had become ghastly pale, while every feature in her face

He knelt upon one knee, and casting his strong arm around her drew her tenderly to his bosom, say-

"My little pet, are you sick? What?" The child clasped her little arms around his neck

"Whom? Do not be alraid, my darling," whis pered Mortimer, soothingly, for Flaydilla trembled so fearfully as to alarm him.

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It is the old woman who used to beat me so," replied

"Ah, then, I will have to look at her," thought Mortimer, rising and holding the child on his left arm. "There, darling, hate your face in my mantie, for I must see who this old wretch is, by all means," replied Mortimer, adjusting his velvet mantle so that the child's features could not be seen and moving from behind the tree.

She who continued to rate Lauretta did not at first perceive him, and therefore he had ample time to study her malignant visage without her knowledge that so keen and sagacious an observation was going

"Ah it is Siballa, the Sorgeress !" he mentally ex claimed, as he recognized the haz. "Now, what has

as if about to strike the shrinking girl, "it is well for you that you are on the green, for I do not wish to draw a crowd, or I'd lay this on your

She was a large and p werful woman, old, but as muscular as an athlete. Her arms, bare to the shoulders, were stained with vermillion and painted here and there with black and cabalistic characters and as she gesticulated the muscles stood out hard and distinct, like great cords. She wore a kind of crown fashioned of misletoe and hemlock twigs, beneath which her fleree gray eyes sparkled with evil desires. A long and dingy gown, which once had been crimson, covered her heavy, burly form and trailed for at least a yard behind her.

The hag was vexed in spirit, for the day had been approfitable to her purse at her own booth, which was in another market place. No one had consulted her all that day to ask her ail in prying into the future, great and dreaded as was her reputation, for a Ival had swept away all her custom by making small gifts to all who consulted him-a rival who made much show and parade, and daren to ridicule her powers of prophecy, and sneered at her wisdom, Thus she stood before the flower booth boiling

with a wrath she dared not vent upon that rival, but eager to overwhelm the helpless.

"Do you know, idle wretch, that I have not taken in a shilling all this day?" she continued. "A rasattracted all my trade-but I will be even with him yet. And behold you have not sold a flower! What do you mean? Did you sing as I bade you, to attract customers? Did you pipe up with that fine

cenely as do those bold flower girls over there," re

"And did you not sing? I gave you a new ballad to learn. You can read as well as any clerk in London. Dame Manefield taught you that, and you can sing like a nightingale. Are you too good to earn your dally bread ?"

"I am not too good to work, Sibalia, but I am good to sing the vulgar ballad you gave me."

"Hear the proud fool. I wrote the ballad myself. and she is too good to sing it, while she mopes and lets those wenches get a'l the custom. Out on your

With these words the enraged hag lifted up her crooked staff and struck Lauretta a sharp blow upon the shoulder. She raised the staff again to repeat the brutal deed, but with a leap like that of a leopard from her hand and broke it in twain, saying as be

"Witch, but that you claim to be a woman, though you are more of a devil, I would belabor you to a

The sorceress was much amazed at this unexpected assault, and for a moment remained heaped up on

THE SORCERESS AT BAY.

The mishap of the sorceress was not unseen by

"I will see to that, detestable witch," replied Morti

mer, as he stepped between the vindictive hag and As he did so his mantie felt from the face of Play

dilla, and the old woman recognized the child with a howl of mingled rage and wonder. "Fia! He has got Fia! Ah, you little sprite of obstinacy," she added, brandishing her fists and glaring

at the affrighted child, "you dared to escape from your good old grandmother. But I'll have you back "You are not my grandmother," oried the child, "Brother Mortimer, save me."

A crowd had now swarmed around the spot—a crowd composed of apprentices, tradesmen, farmers and idlers, who, prepossessed by the noble air of Mortimer and the beauty of those he protected, began to revile the hideous old woman with cries of

began to revile the hideous old woman with cries of scorn and hate. "Out upon the old witch!" said a bluf-faced coun-tryman, four shishing a stout oaken staff. "Witches "Av. she wishes to use her in her sorrery," cried another. "Peit her, lads! Drive her off the green," "Stop, my friends," said Mortimer, as several rushed forward as it about to mattest the scowling old woman, who faced the scorers with an enSIBALLA, THE SORCERESS.

raz M vissa ce. "To not har u her but make way or me and this young ady, who has been hadly used by this ord womain. Chirz to my arm, Lauretta, and we will harry away."

He took of his velvet mantle and cast it over the scartily ead shoulders of the dower girl, unwilling that he rade eyes of the mob should feast upon such beauty.

icaven bless you, dear Mortimer," said Lauretta, as she caspe; the manue aro and her. "She would have killed me it had not exposed my neck and ar as. She said it would attract rule." av no more Lauretta. You can explain all when reach my mother's house," replied Mo.timer, as

we reach my mother's house," replied Mostimer, as they moved away in haste.

Siba la wood have; arsued had she dare I, but the menacing aspect and shouts of the crowd warled her that she had best look to her own safety.

Sorcery was ex re nely unpopular in that are, and, in fact, the late fratricular Kinz, Elward IV., had compassed the death of his brother George, Duke of Clarence, by accusing him of the crime of sorcery.

Sibalia, ho vever, though she professed to forstell and prophery, claimed that she received her power iron good spirits and that she dealt with nothing evil, nor had any formal accusation ever been made arainst her. Some secret friend of powerful inducate at court also protected her, and she could show a permit from no meaner hand than that of the King giving Sibalia Thombuck the right to foreteil and receive pay therefor.

Still she was hared as well as feared by the people, flated because of her furnous temper and otter tongue joined to the general belief that all sorceres necessarios had dea inga with evil aprits in divers shapes, and somethies with the father of all evil nimes!; feared because it was currently reported that none who dared to offend her had ever prospered after—that some mishap was sure to befail the offender.

that none who dared to offen! her had ever prospered after—that some mishap was sure to befall the offender.

Thus she was regarled with dark feelings by all, and many who had intherto avoide! her balein! gaze now took courage from the number of her reciliers and chamored for her punishment.

The entreaty of Mortamer, as he left the flower book, restrained the violence of the crowd but for a moment, and when a voice shouted, "Let us cudge! the witch," a score of o hers repeated the cry.

Shoula, perceiving her danger, looked about for an open ag to escape, but saw that she was completely acamed in by a deep circle of dashing eyes, angry laces and outstretched arms.

Though all shouted "Beat her!" "Cudge! her!" "Tau her to pleces!" all watted for so ne on to begin the attack, for finding fight impossible the dependent hag had drawn a great kinie from under her gown and delich her enemies.

"Come on, ye rascally dogs!" she screamed, as she dourished the glittering steel over nead. "Who says 'Beak her!" here she is. Come on, my bold oness! Who wish athe first taste of my kinier it won't hurt—on no! Don't be afraid, my chitiren of the devil. Its point and edges are polsomed, my dars, Jult a scratch on your hides and he's all up with you. You'll due before the day's out. That is all. Cone on, my lads. Lay on, my boys. The old woman is not afraid. She won't hurt you—oh no!"

Thus sneering and threate ang the herce sorceress stood at bay, delying and jeering by turns.

There was much assorting by turns, when the front rank shrank from the terriole glare of her dery eyes, the glitter of her poisoned kinde, and the desperate raye and hate wand distorted her hideous, scarlet visage, and spin tered nakes of foam from her grinning teets and purple lips.

Even the bluf-faced countryman with the stout gasen stuff reco. et as she dar ed a giance of fure

lasks of foam from her grinning teeth and purple lips.

Even the bluf-faced countryman with the stout caken staff, recored as she dar ed a giance of fury at him, surreking as she shook her kinie at him.

"Come, clodhopper, try your staif against my kinie? I chaw bucon, you are a coward!"

At this moment an incident occurred which added to the growing terror of the superstituous mob. A large owl suddenly fluttered down with heavy, dapping wings from the tree near the booth and percent on the head of the streetess, rolling his great, staring eyes about him and snapping his horny boak.

Should recognized the bird, as he fluttered from

beas.

Siballa recognized the bird, as he fluttered from
the are, as one of ner uncouth pets which had escaped rom her booth that mornare. The ugly bird
as a recognized the voice of his mistress, and being
hungry after his transcriptor. hungry after his truancy, naturally sought the pres-ence of one who supplied his voracity with dainty

The mob, however, imagined this mass of feathered ugliness as one of the servant demons of the sorceress county to her aid, and leit back hastily as she called out:—

"Are you there Philip? Look at the rascals, Philip! Be really to tear their eyes out, my pet. Then scratch the fare of that clothopper," she ad leit, pointing at a farmer whose eyes were expanded with terror as ne gazed at the bird.

The owi, trained to understand and obey every gesture of his miscress, swooped at the farmer with a hoarse cry, and gashed his cheek with a swift citteh of his sharp and powerful claws.

The boor, who imagined the devit was in the bird, roared with pain and terror, and plunged headlong into the crowd, yelling at the top of his voice.—

"Save me, good people! Save me from the devil and all his angels!"

A sha I thing will often strike a mob with a panic, and, instead of looking to the safety of the luckless boor, every man, woman and called held in languable haste and confusion.

The owf duttered heavily around his mistress, as if drawing a magic circle for her protection, and then, dazzled by the rays of the "un, again perched limi-The mob, however, imagined this mass of

The owl duttered heavily around his mistress, as if drawing a magic circle for her protection, and then, dazzled by the rays of the "un, again perched himself upon her head, mbbling her ear, as was his custom when he desired food.

The moo, however, grancing back over their shoulders, imagined that the owl was imparting diabolical scaemes to the sorceress for their punisament, and did not pause until at a considerable distance.

There they halted to take note or the movements of the sorceress, who had made no attempt to pursue them, as they had leared.

"I'd give a ton of hay," said the farmer with the bleeding check as he caught breath. "to wring the neck of that owl. May the flend take hi."

"The flend is in the bird," repued the blur-faced country man with the staff. "When it deried at you, itodge, I made at it to strike it Govin, and, as I a a a living man, my lad, my cudge, cut through it without turning a leather."

out turning a leather."
"Let's peit the witch, Robin; but wait—there goes a party of the city gallants towards her "They are servants of nobles," said Robin, "and he on the horse must be a caref. But, hodge, here comes a score of riders riding in at the horse gate of

comes a score of riders riding in at the horse gate of the green."

The countrymen moved aside to give way before the advance of a small cavaicate of well armed and stee, clad men, at whose head rode one whose name has been handed down to posterity—as internates. If was a man in the prime of young manhood, being not quite threy-two years of age; yet his dark and sinister face, despite its many multisomeness, and sinister face, despite its many multisomeness, appeared far older. The creat and cuming of one old in scheming ambition and mercaless cruelty stready wrinkled the cheeks and forrowed the brow of itchard of ollocester then king of singland. He sat in his steel saddle creet and stern, and as he entered the green his keen, wary glance swept rapidly over all.

The form of the sorceress was at the moment a conspicuous object, for site stood in the centre of a great circle of people whose cries and gestures were directed toward her.

"There is the woman I desire to see," remarked

directed toward her.

"There is the woman I desire to see," remarked
the king as his eye fell upon the crimson gown o. the
sorceress. "Spur after, gentle.nen."

"The King," crued a hundred voices, us the people
recognized the monarch. "Way for the King!" No cheers of applianse ever greeted the usurper when he appeared in public. He was nated and feared by the people, and women turned paie and sauddered when the savage musderer of the "Princes

sauddered when the savage musderer of the "Princes in the Tower" passed by.

While the King and his party advanced at a rapid trot, their awords and spurs jingting foudly, a nobleman mounted on a powerful black horse and attended by half a score or so of mea-at-arms on foot, had already reached the sorceress and reined his steed near her.

"Mat means this rabble rout? Have any dared to show you discespect, Shoulia Thornbuck?

"Ay, my Lord, and if they dared would murder me cowards knaves. But here comes the king, for whose sign manual these rascals show no respect. But, my Lord, I have just been roused of the cert Lauretta."

girl Lauretta."
"Robied! What mean you, Shalla? Have you lost her? demanded the hoble hastily, while his harsh voice showed much agriculton.
"True, Lord Reger. A gailant, marvellously like him who siceps in the chest, but now santched her from me and hurried away with her. I would have pursued, if but to do no more than learn where he ares, but the mobstook his part and were about to

marder me."

Refore Lord Roger De Montford could reply the King strived upon the spot, and scarcely delining to notice the noble said to Schalla:

"Woman, are you she whom they call Siballa, the Sorceres?"

"Woman, are you she whom they call Shalla, the Sorceress."

"My liege, I am no sorceress. That is a name which my enemies have fixed upon me that they may destroy me. I am an honest lemale seer, who, by the help of good angels, can foreteit the evil which lirks in the future of all who consult me. My name, your grace, is Siballa Thornbuck, and I bear the royal sign manual of the noble Richard —"
"Peace, We know that we were persuaded by Lord noger be Montfort to affix our royal signature to a parcament granting you certain extraordinary privileges. Until how we have never seen you. By St. Faull you look not like one to whom any angel, good or bad, would give aid, though there is much of the devil in your face."
"My face is as God made it, your grace," said Siballa, while her red eyes flashed with resentment even against the king. "He fashions the faces of women and shapes the forms of men as He sees fit."

"You are over bold, bug," cried, the king, whose

Women and shaper the stage of the king, whose sensitiveness to anoth that hinted at deformity wanced under the covert sneer. "But you speak faisely. Vice and lust have made up the ugliness of your face. We have heard of your strange powers and would put them to the test. See to it that you are at the private entrance of our palace at the hour

and would put them to the test. See to it that you are at the private entrance of our palace at the hour of ten to-night."

Having spoken these words, Richard gianced keenly at the face of Lord Roger and rode away, followed by his escort.

"Fall back, knaves," said Lord Roger to his attendants. "I have something to say to this woman."

His followers obeyed and the sorceress drew very near to the noble, who bent in his saddle and whispered: pered:—
"You see the king treats me coldly. He suspects
me as he does every one." SIBALLA, THE SORCERESS.

"Has be cause, my lord " askel Sibalia, sharply.

"What is that to you, Sibalia? You are to have a private an lence with the King." Contrive to dissipate his susp clous."

It was straige that a noble so noted for his weal hand heree character as Roger de Montfort should use a tone of deep respect a 11 even of dependence toward a creature so base and despirable as Sibalia Thornbook.

as a tone of deep respect and even of dependent toward a creature so base and despicable as Sibalia Thornbuck.

Some mysterious tie bound them together in all their schames—a secret yet powerful the, known as yet only to themse vas.

"I will do at that I can, my lord," replied Sibally, gravely; "but in the meantime what is to be done about that et a? She has been torn from me, as it said, and by a gallant who resembles strangely the min who sleeps in the chest."

"He careful in your expressions, Sibalia," said Lod Roger. "Do you know the gallant?"

"No, my lord, nor ever saw into before. But I have more to tell you. You reamenber the little grif, F.a., we called her?"

"Ay, what of hor? Have you recovered her? Have you seen or neard aught of her?" demanded the noble eagely.

"The same gallant who snatched away Lauretta carried in his arms that very cuild."

"Then she lives?"

"Lives, and is well cared for by no common person, if I may judge by his dress and bearing. Now, mark this sudden conjunction of evil presage to you, my lord," shad the sorceres a slenniy. "The kin t is evidently suspicious of your loyalty. Lauretta, upon whose possession so much depends is snatched from my onitro, by one of who a I have no knowledge, but whose form ar and features are the living image of the main in the chest, and who is the protector of the child Fia, who should be either dead or in our power. As I live," she exclaimed, and pointing towards a distant booth, "these stands the unknown gallant now, with Lau etts and the child. Can we not manage to separate the n from their protector and regal possession of both?"

"All the condition of the man in the cones, and who is the protector of the canid Fia, who should be either dead or in our power, As I live," she exclaimed, and pointing towards a distant booth, "these stands the unknown gallant now, with Lau etts and the child. Can we not manage to separate the n from their protector and regal possession of both?"

"All the condition of the gallant and evade us in the crowd."

Lo

CHAPTER III. THE CLUB OF THE PRINTER.

After leaving the victaity of the sorceress Mortimer Clair, with Fragillia on his left arm and Lauretta cinging to his right, had directed his steps towards one of the gates of the inclosure, intending to master the his mather's house. o his mother's house.
They had reached the gate when Playdilla cried

"Frother, we are going nome and nave no howers for mother,"

"True, my little pet," replied Mortimer," and that must not be. I hardly think that the sorceress will dure to motist us again, especially as I see that the people have surrounded her. We will go back and purchase a garand."

"Mortimer," whispered Lauretta, in an anxious tone, "do not look around just yet. Are you listen-

"Could you speak to me, Lauretta, and ask me

that?"
"thank you, dear Mortimer. But do not look around yet, for I am sure we are followed."
"ily whom, Lauretta?"
"If they are dressed as mummers."
"If they are dressed as mummers how do you know that they are gentlemen, young or old?" asked Mo. timer as they crossed the green, yet not looking back."

"oh, they twice stopped at the booth where you found me, and asked to purchase flowers, offering five times the price I stated if I would permit them to kiss me....."

"the rude scoundreis" exclaimed Mortimer, flushing with jealousy.

"they to k me to be like these bold girls in the other booths, horthmer—an, it was base and crade in that old woman to expose a modest girl to such insults. I trembie less you, Mortimer, think less of me now."

"Say no more of that, Lauretta," interrupted Mortimer, onlicity. "My faith in your burns is un-"Say no more of that, Lauretta," interrupted Mortimer, quickty. "My faith in your purmy is unsmaken, dearest gri, and I know you can readily expain at as soon as we can converse in peace. But of the mammers—now did you discover that they were young genilemen? Ah, it is crue," he added, after a quick and apparently careless gamee over insabolider, "we are loolowed by two mammers, masked and in quant disguise. But tail me why you talk they are not of the raoble?"

Before we give the reply of Lauretta it may be went to state to the unimformed reaser, if any are uninformed in these days of general education, what was meant by the term "mummers," a word when has aimost gone out of use, though common in the time of which we write.

on all holidays many disguised themselves in masks and fantastic dress s, often of the most abpard and laughable as wen as of the most repusive designs, and thus attired strolled through the streets or jested and danced around the market paace, singing and carousing.

Binging and carousing.

Binoad and course oumor, rude practical jokes, pleased the taste of the age, and the wind and root-ous of both sexes delighted in the immunity anforded by disguise to revei unknown. Nobles and gentry as well as the lowest ranks of the populace, this attired, used their disguises as much for light and serious intrigue as for sport.

These maskers were terined "mummers" in the days of sichard ill., and two of them were evidently following Mortimer Clair and his companions, whether through harmness curiosity or wicked intention could not be told.

"You see that there are two of them," replied Lauretta. One in a bine dress trained with silver lace, and the other in green and gold is the chief. I believe they are young nobles—at least one of them—and the other is of the gentry. First, the material of their dress is new and very costly, their votes are smooth, and their language, though vulgar in meaning, correct and poissed in utterance. I noticed, too, that both wore golden spurs, and no one interior to that of a knight is permitted to wear them. Even you, Mortimer, though of the gentry no doubt, cannot wear golden spurs."

Mortimer smilled at this remark, and then suddenly looked grave, saying:—
"Some day I may wear them with hereditary right as wed as these two gay gallants; at present what right I have to wear them i won with my sword."
He paused a moment as if in doubt, and then taking a pair of geiden spurs from his boson stooped and buckied them upon his horis.
"Ah, then you are a knight?" exclaimed Lauretta, amazed, "i knew you were a none by nature, Mortimer; but I did not know that you were a knight?"
"low will not love me less for that, Lauretta?"
"love you less, Mortimer! Alas, why should you love me?"
"Because you are beautiful and innocent, Laurettasy or the start of the start of

"Because you are beautiful and innocent, Lau-retta. But what more of the minimers?"
"But tell me why you put on those spars, brother Mortimer?" asked Flaydila.
"To warn those massers that I am not to be followed with insolent curiosity, or perhaps because they design to insuit Lauretta Lo my presence." "They drew of their gloves at the booth," continue

"They drew off their gloves at the booth," continued Lauretta, "and I saw that their hands were far an I clean, and decked with jew-led rings, so that you see that they hand be at least of the gentry. Essides, I heard the one in blue and silver call him in green and gold Sir Simon."

"It is very probable that they are as you suppose, Lauretta. We will pause at this booth, and perimps they may pass on. Sir Simon, did you say?"

"Yes, Sir Simon Vagra u, I thias," replied Lauretta, and as sine glanced at her lover's fare said added, "Ah, why sre you so pale, Mortimer."

"Sir Simon Vagram? You are sure?" asked Mortimer, laying his hand upon the hist of his sword, and haiting abruptly, though stid several paces from the booth to which he had directed his app. "You make no mistake in the name, Laurettar for are certain that he in green and gold was called Sir Simon Vagram?"

know him?"
"It must be his son," said Morttmer, speaking his thoughts aloud, and not heeding Lauretta's question, "the son of Roger Simon Vagram, now called Lord Roger be Montiort. It is impossible that he should know me. He may not be so great a vidian as his latter. We will see,"
They moved on an i soon stood near the flower booth in which two bold faced, brazen looking young women were sailing garlands, wreaths and bouquets.

women were seming great quets.

Ine throng of speciators and buyers was so great that Kortimer saw it would be difficult to force his way to the flower table unless he left his companion, and thus he was unwilling to do.

"Let us wait," he said. "We have time enough, and beside, I wish to see if those two mammers intend to continue the rannoying pursuit."

end to continue the rannoying pursuit."
It was then that he was seen by the sorceress, as

tend to continue the rannoying pursuit."

It was then that he was seen by the sorceress, as we have narrated.

Mortimer, however, was not looking toward Siballa, but kept his eyes fixed upon the two mammers, who contrived to advance with an hile, sauntering pace, until they halted within a few feet of him and nis companions.

Their masks were plain, though of white velvet, leaving nothing visible of their faces except their eyes, these they fixed rudely upon the beautiful and binshing countenance of Lauretta.

"So," said he in green and gold, with a light laugh, "the beauty of the flowers has flown from her roses to roam with"—here he stared at Mortimer, and added, "with—what shall we call this gallant, Sir Barton ?"

"Call him the king of crows," repiled his companion, and alluding to Mortimer's black gart.

"Sir," said Mortimer, haughtly, "I am the friend and protector of this lady, as you may learn to your cost. Go your way and we will go ours."

"Best let him alone," whispered Si Barton to his comrade. "He is a stranger to me, but he wears spurs and is no country simpleton, as we thought. Come, there is fight in his face and eyes."

"The girl pleases me, Barton; and though she is a prude, this tail feelow shall not ruffie it so loudly with me. If you are afraid of his spurs or his eyes you may leave," replied Sir Simon, pettishiy.

"Bah I Barton Woolfort fearest nothing," said the other, "Your father buys my sword for your attendance, and I have drawn it often in your wild frolles, and will do so again, Sir Simon, but I warn you to avoil any man with a front and air like this. Let the girl pass; there are bundreds as fair, who will cap tuelr hands with Joy to receive your notice,"

"No, there are none fairer. I am smitten through the heart by her boauty. At least I will learn her

SIBALLA, THE SORCERESS. name," said the rash young noble, as he advanced toner Clair insteatly placed Flavdilla upon the

is said nothing as he did this, but his eyes hashed p de lance with these of Sir Simon. The inter, at by Moram r's bearing, who ped out his

"Tournpain! do you dare lay your hand on your sword at me?"

"At, ib time, and draw it on you as readily," replet! Mortuner, as his sword! cauel from 1 is sheath, and, with a single strok, sent our inous! spinning in the air, grantly to the wonder of that young rascal. The can hof steel was to those with a heating like a spack of fire is ling upon ganpowde. Instantly the cry of 'Swors! a light!" was raised and a ring of excited a cetators belted in the gentlemen and the two trembing griss.

Sir Sum a's sword had town too far for him to regain it ere it had been trampled upon and broken by the heavy hobinaled brogans of the mob. But his taker and mere foundable companion's sword was out and immediately crossed that of Mortimer. "You may disarra a boy, my back frient," said Sir Parco, tanningly, as he basiled an attempt of Mortimer to dach his sword from his grasp, "but not me."

Mortimer to da h his sword from his grasp, "but not me."

Sir Bar'on Woolfort, a mere adventurer and bravo, famous for his courage and skill as a brawler, and knigh ed by redward IV. for his desperace valor at the bait e of Barnet, had been employed by Lord Rose, Earl of Montiort, to attend upon h s wild and reckless heir. Sir Simon Vagram, and therefore never inited to stand fairly and squarely in behalf of the young libertine.

As he spoke the above words a sharp thrust of Mortimer's sword tore away his mask of white velvet and revealed hissawarthy, war-a soled visage, "Take care, young sir," cried a voice in the ring of spectators. "That is Black Barton you are fighting!"

"Were he the black devil I would not fear him," replied Mortimer, assaling the notorious bully with a skill and resolution which taxed the adventurer's defeace sorely.

defence sorely.

"He is no pigeon. He aims to ki'l." muttered Sir
Barton, as he was forced back inch by hich, before a
sword more formidable than any he had over met in

London.

"Gads alive!" exclaimed the same friendly voice,

"the youn" gentleman will pink the court builty. At

him Mordiner, at him! and, by Faustus! into him

bravely!" the speaker added, as the sword of the

young gentleman beat aside that of Sir Simon and

young gentie may be at saide that of Sir Simon and was thrust clear to the hilt guards through the through of the buly.

The wounded man uttered a cry of rage and pain, and felt heavily on the green sward. He was scarcely there when Mortimer's foot was upon his breast, while he reached forward, grasped the collar of Sir Simon, and with astonishing quickness hurled the young baronet across the body of Sir Barton ere the latter could struggle to his fect.

In another instant Mortimer tore off the mask of Sir Simon, and gazed sternly into the noble's pale face.

In another instant Mortimer tore off the mask of Sir Simon, and gazed sternly into the noble's pale face.

It was a fair and handsome face, more suitable to a woman's form than that of a man yet withat a face fair of evil evpression, cunning, and treachery, it was not a cowardly face either. Of the fips and of in were resolute and aggress velon their must it and the eyes keen and deflant even their, while the aword of Mortimer Clair was not the throat of their owner.

Sir Barion could not rise, as Sir Simon lay across his chest, and the knee of aloritimer was pressing sharply upon the breast of the young baronet, while the victor said, sternly:—

"Ask pard un, Sir Simon, of the lady you presumed to insuct, or see the light of day no more."

A gance at the resolute face which frowned upon him to d Sir Simon that the victor was not a man whose threats were mere wind. He saw speedy death in the blazing orbi fashing over him, yet to made no appeal for mercy, though his check and lips grew detaily pale.

"Devil" he cried, giaring hate and deflance as he scowied at his conquevor, "I defy you! Do you think a Vagram will apologise to a trult?"

"Clair!" said Mortimer, as he drew back his hand to give force to his intended thrust. "She is purer than the mother who bore you!"

"On on slay him. Mortimer !" exclaimed Lauretta, who had sprung forward and graspe! the powerful arm of her lover. "Do not, for my sake! Oh, it is a dread all thing to take a human life! Spare him!"

Yielding reauctantly to the entreaties of Lauretta and appressions and turned to confront one whose name and the struck his ear with terrible force.

The Earl of sonaffor !" should it so no one in the colour. "Way for the Earl of Montfort!"

Yielding reauctantly to the entreaties of Lauretta and all his ear with terrible force.

The Earl, conspicuous in his lofty seat upon his coal black war seed, erect and formulable in bearing, and scowing angrily as he urged his horse straight through the deuse curele of spectators, reined up as he entered the space

bloated cheeks of his mistress that he will be a horrible stare.

"What means this disgraceful scene?" demanded Lord Koger, in a harsh, disagreeable voice, as his deepset eyes fiashed rebuke upon his son and Sir Barton; and, for the moment forgetting the sorceress, "Simon Vagram, what rout is this?"

As he repeased this inquiry his eyes for the first time fell upon the haughty, yet noble face and form of Mortimer Clair, whose dark and steady eyes were fixed earnessly upon his features.

An ashy pailor swept every single of crimson from the face of the carl as he stared, open mouthed, at the young gentleman whose flery gaze seemed to search and perice his soul. Lord Roger trembled in his saddle and he seemed so faint and sick, was so deathly pale, that the sorceress, whose keen eyes were suddenly turned upon him, grasped his irongioved hand and cried warningly.

"Take care my lord. Beware of the evil eye!"

These words recalled the courage of the earl. His

"Take care my lord. Beware of the evil eye!"
These words recated the courage of the earl. His dark has burned with shame and wrath. He drew his sword has hiy shd perceiving that his guards had arrived upon the spot, cried out:—
"Seize and bind that man! Seize him instantly! Bin! and gag him!"
"Back!" shouted Mortimer, undannted by the overwhelming olds so suddenly arraye! against him. "What right has Robert Vagram, Earl de Montfort, to order my arrest!"
His bearing was so bold, his all so noble, his handsome and glowing face so prepossessing, that the guarls hesitated, what the people who index Earl Rozer began to murmur loudly.
"Ay why arrest a gentleman who has merely defended his sisters!"
"These proud lords think the people have no rights! He foryest that he is no born noble. Ay, and that had noble Earl Heary live! t.ll now he'd be plain Stimon doger Vagram, the scrivener! A flg for his nobility!"
Earl Roge: glared angrily about him as these cries fell holly upon his ears, and he was about to repeat his orders fercely, when an elderly gentleman clad in plain brown ga b but wearing a sward and badge of honor, forced his way to Mortimer's side, while the mob shouted:—

'Long live William Caxton! Caxton, the

Long live William Caxton! Caxton, the printer;"
William Caxton, for the gentleman was none other than that great pioner of the press, the first that ever printed a book in England, lifted his hat as a signal for silence, and then addressing Earl Roger,

said—
"Be careful, my lord, in ordering the arrest of this gentieman. He stands high in the favor of one whose letter your lordship bears in your bosom. I will youch for his appearance when and where you command. Take care, I say, m/ lord. He comes from over the sea. Your lordship knows my meaning."

ing."

Ince cheers for William Caxton, whose types will light all men in England to liberty of thought "cried a deep voice from one in the crowd.

Three hearty cacers followed these words, for a mob will should not every and any opportunity. But the speaker of these words had a deep purpose in view in thus raising the cry of the crowd and making "the welk in ring." He knew that the noise would harry hundreds of others to the spot to see and hear and no doubt to aid in beating down the unpopular earl and his armed followers, should occasion demand.

and no doubt to aid in beating down the unpopular carl and als armed tellowers, should occasion demand.

While the choers were still shaking the air, he advanced from the mass and stood at the side of Mortimer. In full view of the earl.

"Here am I, Nicholas Fame," he said, as be brandished a formitable club, heavily studded at the end with spikes of fron an incm in length. "Here am I, Nicholas Fame, torman of the printers, ready to say that sir Mortimer is as good as any earl see now!"

With these bod words he stared steadily into the face of Lord Roger and seemed to dare his rage. The Earl recognized the stall and powerful min as one whom he had not seen for many a long year—as one whom he had not seen for many a long year—as one whom he had not seen for many a long year—as one whom he had not seen for many a long year—as one whom he had not seen for many a long year—to the face of that mobleman.

He recognized him with a gasp of terror, in which he amazed sorceroess greatly shared; for, on seeing Nicholas Fiame, she screened her ugly form and hideous face beaind the horse of the nobleman.

Sir Barton Woolfort's wound though bielding freely and in the throat, had injured no vital organ, the concussion of the thrust alone naving overthrown his athlete frame, but his sword had snapped as he fell, and he was now armed only with a dagger. This, however, he was ready to use—nny, tager to wield; for he was not a man to be easily put down, nor one that ever sarank Iron an affray.

"Were I in my steel jacket," he muttered, as he gared at Nicholas Fiame, "I'd soon scatter talts mob oil brawing knaves!"

"Mark Sir Barton," whispered Sir Simon, "how my father stares at the knave with the club. He seems amazed."

Amaled but for a moment, for, rousing himself with a powerful effort, Earl longer dashed his spurinto the flanks of his horse, and as the alimat leaged forward with a mighty bound, raised his sword, shouting.—"Out down the villain with the club: Guards, obey i"

"Cut down the villain with the club! Guards, obey !"

The sturdy foreman of the printers did not leap asule or attempt to avoid the onset.

His massive club swept through the air with a single rapid sweep, and as it crashed loudy upot the steet plate which guar ed the torehead of the steet plate which guar ed the torehead of the steet, both horse and reter fell heavily to the ground as if smitten by a tanaderboit.

The continuation of SIBALLA, THE SORCERESS, will be found in No. 50 of the Ne.W 10RK WEEKLY, now really and for sale by all news agents.